

Par. 1. **Material Transmitted and Purpose** --Transmitted with this Manual Letter is revised Service Chapter 624-05 – Foster Care Services Permanency Planning. PI-15-03 has been incorporated in this manual letter. The old language has been struck through and the revisions are in red and underlined.

Par. 2. **Effective Date** –April 1, 2015

### **Exit from Foster Care (ASFA) 624-05-15-35-10**

A child is considered to leave foster care when any of the following is true:

1. The court enters an order:
  1. Denying a petition to grant care, custody, and control of the child to the agency or to the Division of Juvenile Services,
  2. Terminating such a custody order, or
  3. Appointing a legal guardian; or
2. The court order under which the child entered foster care ends by operation of law; or
3. The child is placed in a parental home by the court or legal custodian other than the Division of Juvenile Services and the legal custodian lacks authority to remove the child without further order of the court; or
4. The child is placed in a parental home by the legal custodian with the intent for the child to remain home. (This is not a trial home visit.)
5. Custodians are required to close the foster care program in FRAME, no later than 30 days from the date of discharge from foster care.

A child is not considered to be in foster care on any night during which the child is:

1. On a trial home visit; or

2.     Receiving services at the Youth Correctional Center pursuant to an adjudication of delinquency; or
3.     Absent without leave from the place in which the child was receiving foster care.

Trial Home Visits:

A trial home visit must be a planned, formalized, agency-supervised visit in the reunification home for a specified, limited period of time not to exceed six months unless otherwise authorized by the court. A trial home visit must be discussed at Permanency Planning Committee/Foster Care Child and Family Team meeting and entered into a child's case plan, and no foster care payments are made during the visit period. Casual or incidental visits, e.g., to attend a wedding or funeral, are not considered "trial home visits" even if they are part of the child's reunification plan.

Federal regulations provide: A trial home visit may not exceed six months in duration, unless a court orders a longer trial home visit. If a trial home visit extends beyond six months and has not been authorized by the court, or exceeds the time period the court has deemed appropriate, and the child is subsequently returned to foster care, that placement must then be considered a new placement and Title IV-E eligibility must be newly established. Under these circumstances, the judicial determinations regarding contrary to the welfare and reasonable effort to prevent removal are required [1356.21(e)].

**Foster Care Verification Form:** For all youth discharged from foster care at the age of 16 or older, Custodians are required to complete the foster care verification form (SFN 1612). This form may assist youth with entry into the ND Chafee IL program, apply for FAFSA, receive scholarships, and if they "aged out" it could provide proof for Medical Assistance until age 26.